AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Original) A method of preparing a cartilage, comprising adhering cell masses onto the surface of a carrier shaped into a desired form and culturing the cell masses under conditions which induce differentiation of the cell masses into a cartilage tissue.

2. (Original) A method of preparing an artificial joint, comprising adhering cell masses onto the surface of a carrier shaped into a form of a desired joint and culturing the cell masses under conditions which induce differentiation of the cell masses into a cartilage tissue.

3. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim ~~1 or~~ 2, wherein the joint surface is formed with the cells, matrices produced by the cells or a combination thereof.

4. (Original) The method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the carrier has micropores.

5. (Original) The method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the cells are mesenchymal stem cells or chondrocytes.

6. (Original) The method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the culture is performed *ex vivo* and in the presence of a growth factor(s).

7. **(New)** The method according to claim 1, wherein said cell masses comprise mesenchymal stem cells or chondrocytes and said carrier comprises calcium triphosphate having micropores with a diameter of 10-500 microns.

8. **(New)** The method according to claim 2, wherein said cell masses comprise mesenchymal stem cells or chondrocytes and said carrier comprises calcium triphosphate having micropores with a diameter of 10-500 microns.

9. **(New)** The method according to claim 7, wherein said cells are human bone marrow-derived mesenchymal stem cells and said carrier has a curved surface to which said cells adhere.

10. **(New)** The method according to claim 9, wherein said cells are cultured in the presence of TGF-beta for a time sufficient for the cell masses to adhere onto said curved surface and to fuse to each other.

11. **(New)** The method according to claim 8, wherein said cells are chondrocytes and said carrier has a curved surface to which said cells adhere.

12. **(New)** The method according to claim 11, wherein said cells are cultured in the presence of TGF-beta for a time sufficient for the cell masses to adhere onto said curved surface and to fuse to each other.